

# Harm reduction in party environments.

Stefanie Jones, Director of Audience Development  
Drug Policy Alliance  
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**We are  
the Drug  
Policy  
Alliance.**

# About the Drug Policy Alliance.

- National drug policy reform advocacy organization
- 7 offices around the country, headquarters in NYC
- We promote drug policies based in science, compassion, health and human rights
- Work areas:
  - Reducing the role of criminalization
  - Responsible marijuana regulation
  - Promoting health & reducing harm
  - Empowering youth, parents, educators

# Harm reduction philosophy.

- Harm reduction is a public health philosophy and intervention that seeks to reduce the harms associated with drug use and ineffective drug policies.
- A basic tenet of harm reduction is that there has never been, and will never be, a drug-free society.
- Therefore, harm reduction advocates seek to reduce harm through
  - Spreading accurate, fact-based information;
  - Taking steps to allow for drug-based illness or injury prevention;
  - Reducing the impact of drug policies that cause harm.



# Why harm reduction in party environments is important.

Drug Use Comparison – “Clubbers” vs. “Non-Clubbers”  
(Source: Global Drug Survey, 2017 / U.S. data, N=5,035, self-selecting)

Type of Drug Use in last 12m	Non-Clubbers N=3,191	Visitors (1-3 times/yr) N=980	Clubbers (4+ times/yr) N=864
Cannabis	89%	89%	93%
Cocaine	18%	33%	52%
LSD	30%	33%	45%
MDMA powder	11%	24%	41%
Psilocybin	22%	29%	39%
MDMA pills	7%	17%	33%
Ketamine	4%	8%	17%
Amphetamine	9%	11%	16%
2CB	3%	4%	8%

# Party environment harm reduction

## #1: Education.



- People (especially young people) are often poorly informed about basic alcohol and other drug effects and safer use practices.
- Accurate, **non-judgmental**, realistic information consistently conveyed can do more to change behavior than any other intervention.
- Implementing peer-based services is an effective, evidence-based practice.

# Party environment harm reduction

## #2: Onsite Peer Support.



- For patrons who are having a difficult experience, but medically stable, an optimal practice is to incorporate trained mental health counselors, therapists and peers to provide compassionate care.
- Medical teams can provide critical care for those actually in need.
- Onsite peer support reduces unnecessary hospital transfers, arrests, and potential additional trauma to patrons.





# Party environment harm reduction

## #3: Drug Checking.



- Drug checking (“pill testing”) allows people who use drugs to identify and avoid ingesting unknown substances.
- Given the highly adulterated drug market, this harm reduction service has the biggest single impact on reducing deaths.
- There are many technologies and approaches to conducting drug checking depending on the goals of the event and its host community.

# What it looks like in action: DPA & its #SaferPartying campaign.



Goal → to reduce drug-related deaths, hospitalizations and arrests at festivals, concerts and clubs by:

- Spreading accurate, fact-based information;
- Creating services that address problems before they become medical issues;
- Reducing the impact of drug policies that cause harm.



# What it looks like in action: partnership with festival producers.



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## DPA and Insomniac Partner on a New Harm Reduction Effort: Project #OpenTalk



October 27, 2016 - By Stefanie Jones

It's an important moment: [Insomniac Events](#), one of the biggest EDM festival producers in the U.S., is beginning to embrace drug education and harm reduction. This Halloween weekend marks the debut of "Project #OpenTalk" at the [Escape: Psycho Circus](#) festival in San Bernardino, California. It's an onsite service that will allow attendees to receive honest, unbiased information about drugs, sex and mental

health concerns.

# What it looks like in action: a coordinated, well-trained team.



# What it looks like in action: public social media support.

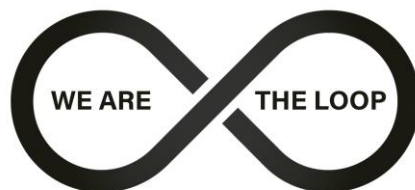




# Party environment harm reduction: a growing global network.

NEWNet (Nightlife Empowerment and Well-Being Network) - Europe

Nightlife Harm Reduction Coalition  
of the Americas



TRIP PROJECT  
TORONTO CANADA

# Party environment harm reduction: support from young people.



*"You guys are awesome...what you do is amazing and we need more of this in our music community!"*

*"Education! I love and appreciate you guys for providing education and support about drugs."*

*"This is such a great idea! I'm glad you guys are here."*

# Party environment harm reduction: support from law enforcement.

“Like the Gold Commander for the Kendal Festival I will work with my police colleagues and others to do everything that I can to prevent controlled drugs coming onto the site; to detect and prosecute those intent on supplying.

That stated, and, indeed, despite large numbers of confiscations, seizures and finds, it is reasonable to suppose that some substances will get on site. ‘The Loop’ provides an additional layer of safeguarding and protection.”

—Laura Hunt, Chief Inspector, Huntingdon Police

In reference to education and harm reduction services provided by UK charity organization The Loop



# How to facilitate a party environment harm reduction approach.



Remove barriers / punishments for operators that want to take this approach.

Seek out and partner with local community groups and nonprofits that can play a useful role.

Find a way to ensure party environment patrons can provide feedback about the services.

# Contact information.

Stefanie Jones  
Director of Audience Development  
Drug Policy Alliance  
NYC / United States  
[sjones@drugpolicy.org](mailto:sjones@drugpolicy.org)  
+1-212-613-8047 office